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JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

EU may launch talks w/ Turkey mid-2005 - Schroeder -
Hurriyet
Chancellor Schroeder promises Turkey Europe - Milliyet
FM Gul extends Russia terror support - Milliyet
Springtime with Russia after eight years - Turkiye
Reform dreams over in Iran - Hurriyet
The Hague discusses 'security wall' - Hurriyet
Wall wars at The Hague - Milliyet
Turks the most optimistic nation in Europe - Survey - Sabah
'Terminator' Schwarzenegger turns to White House - Hurriyet

OPINION MAKERS

Negotiation time in Cyprus - Radikal
Talat concerned about EU guarantee on a Cyprus agreement -
Zaman
EU prefers a 'United Cyprus' - Cumhuriyet
Schroeder boosts Ankara's morale - Radikal
No new condition for Turkey's EU membership - Schroeder -
Zaman
Ankara left Palestine alone on 'security wall' - Cumhuriyet
HRW finds 'security fence' against Geneva Convention -
Radikal
90 nations against Israeli 'security wall' - Yeni Safak
Observers expect conflict among Iranian conservatives - Yeni
Safak
Israel has 82 nuclear weapons - Pentagon report -
Cumhuriyet
Iraqi Shiite leader Muderrisi warns of civil war - Yeni
Safak

BRIEFING

Cyprus: Turkish Cypriots want security, migration and land issues to top the agenda of negotiations today, whereas Greek Cypriots merely want the security issue discussed, say papers. TRNC 'Prime Minister' Mehmet Ali Talat said to the press on Monday that Turks would demand guarantees for political equality at Tuesday's talks. The guarantor status of Turkey should continue, Talat said and warned that migration should not be allowed before the sides reach agreement on settlement, housing and working conditions. Turkish Cypriots are concerned that a prospective Cyprus agreement can be annulled by the European courts, says "Zaman." At the moment, we are examining the validity of EU guarantees, Talat said. Greek Cypriots insist on submitting the Cyprus agreement to Turkish and Greek parliaments for approval before the referenda to be held in Cyprus on April 21, writes "Radikal." Meanwhile, EU foreign ministers have reiterated in Brussels on Monday that the EU wanted a united Cyprus to join the union on May 1, say papers.

Turkish commanders discuss US greater Middle East strategy: Top military commanders came together at a meeting in Ankara on Monday, says "Milliyet." At a 'brainstorming' session chaired by the TGS Chief General Ozkok, force commanders and other generals in Ankara discussed primarily the US greater Middle East project and Turkey's role in the initiative, and Cyprus, Iraq, Iran and Israel, according to Milliyet. German Chancellor in Ankara: Visiting German Chancellor Schroeder has extended full support to Turkey's EU bid, and

praised Ankara's efforts for EU reforms and work to resolve the Cyprus problem. Schroeder is confident that the EU will commence accession negotiations with Turkey by June 2005 at the latest, say papers. Schroeder came to Ankara mainly to extend support to Ankara's EU drive despite the opposition he encountered at home, dailies comment. Turkey's Islamic values, integrated into the values of the EU, will contribute both to the democracy in Turkey and to regional stability, Schroeder said.

Ankara not on Palestine's side on 'security wall': Ankara has declined support to Palestine on the security fence dispute to be discussed at The Hague, writes "Cumhuriyet" on its front page. Ankara has changed its mind in the face of the US and EU position claiming that The Hague is not the proper place to discuss political issues, says Cumhuriyet. Tel Aviv had strongly protested Turkey's initial decision to support the Palestinian thesis, causing Ankara to step back on a decision to testify in support of Palestine at The Hague. Ankara's changing attitude has been a severe disillusion for the Palestinians, the paper notes.

Turks hopeful of the future - Survey: A report by the EU's public opinion research company 'Euro-barometer' finds Turks the most optimistic nation in Europe. Forty-six percent of the surveyed Turks believe they are better off in 2004 compared to last year. Forty-one percent think that Turkey's economy is improving. The military is the most trusted institution in Turkey by 82 percent. Sixty-seven percent of Turks want EU membership, while 10 percent are strongly against, according to the survey.

EDITORIAL OPINION:

- a) Guantanamo
- b) Greater Middle East Initiative

"Guantanamo: Graveyard for International Law"
Retired judge Umit Kardas argued in the liberal-intellectual Radikal (2/24): "The US has been keeping foreigners in Guantanamo base, and their status does not have any legal structure at all. The prisoners of Guantanamo are living under severe conditions and are subject to mistreatment as well as inhumane practices. More than a thousand prisoners have not yet been charged with anything, and apparently they are prisoners of Guantanamo only because of their religious and ethnic background. . Current implementation in Guantanamo is a clear violation of international law, moreover the US administration victimized the American Bill of Rights with the 'fight against terrorism' pretext. . The European Union countries also present an interesting stance. The prisoners of Guantanamo are from 42 countries including, some EU members. Yet the EU is pursuing a position of silence and blindness against the violation of international law. It seems the Guantanamo base has now turned into a graveyard for the international law."

"Why the Greater Middle East Initiative Will Fail"
Gila Benmayor opined in the mass appeal Hurriyet (2/24): "President Bush has high hopes about the Greater Middle East initiative for which PM Erdogan also voiced support. The project is aiming at bringing democracy to the whole Middle East region and it was inspired from the Reagan administration's dream to bring democracy to the East European countries. The Bush administration has been working on this project and it is likely that it will be officially initiated next June. The project covers not only the Middle East countries but also Iran, north African as well as Central Asian countries. Turkish PM Erdogan even suggested that the Caucasus countries be included. The project might seem inspirational but the fact of the matter is that Middle East is definitely not East Europe. Experts seem to agree on the two reasons for the failure of this initiative: First of all, the Arab world does not support such an idea because it is taken as the Western world imposing its values upon them. The second reason is about the Israeli-Palestine conflict. There is absolutely no chance of success for the Middle East initiative as long as the Israel-Palestine conflict remains unresolved."